

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-19 remain in this application with claims 1 and 15 independent claims. Claims 1 and 15 have been amended.

In the outstanding official action, independent claim 1 was rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Stone (US 6,041,057), and further in view of Gleeson et al. (US 5,959,989). Applicant asserts that claim 1 as now amend overcomes this rejection. In particular, Applicant asserts that neither Stone, nor Gleeson, nor any of the cited references, whether taken alone, or in any reasonable combination, teach, disclose, or render obvious that “a user can disable the at least two switches from synchronizing with each other using the VAP and still maintain auto-discovery capability of at least one of said first source learning function and said second source learning function.” As such, Applicant respectfully requests that this rejection be withdrawn.

Regarding the rejection of dependent claims 2-14, as these claims depend either directly or indirectly from independent claim 1, and therefore incorporate all the limitations therein, for the reasons set forth above with respect to claim 1, Applicant respectfully asserts that these claims are also patentable over the cited references.

In the outstanding official action, independent claim 15 was rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Dobbins et al. (US 5,825,772), further in view of Gleeson et al (US 5,959,989). Applicant asserts that claim 15 as now amended overcomes this rejection. In particular, Applicant asserts that neither Dobbins et al., or Gleeson, nor any of the cited references, whether taken alone, or in any reasonable combination, teach disclose or render obvious that “a user can disable the at least two switches from exchanging MAC information using the VAP and still maintain auto-discovery capability of at least one of said first source learning function and said second source learning function.” As such, Applicant respectfully requests that this rejection be withdrawn.

Regarding the rejection of dependent claims 16-19, as these claims depend either directly or indirectly from independent claim 15, and therefore incorporate all the limitations therein, for

the reasons set forth above with respect to claim 15, Applicant respectfully asserts that these claims are also patentable over the cited references.

It is believed that the foregoing amendment places the Application in condition for allowance; therefore, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the Examiner's rejection of the claims, and full allowance of same. Should the Examiner have any further comments or suggestions, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner contact the undersigned to expeditiously resolve any outstanding issues.

Respectfully submitted,

ALCATEL

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